

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 TRSE-00 /065 W

-----071055Z 101817 /13

R 070845Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4622

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 347

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, PFOR, RP, LY

SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES

1. DURING LENGTHY INTERVALS AT NEW YEAR'S RECEPTION

JANUARY 7, I HAD OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

IN MUSLIM REBELLION WITH SEVERAL PHILIPPINE OFFICIALS. MY

MOST PRONOUNCED REACTION IS TO RECORD THE SURPRISING

DEGREE TO WHICH THE FILIPINOS ARE DEPENDING ON QADHAFI'S

GOOD WILL TO MAKE THE TRIPOLI AGREEMENT SUCCEED.

2. PRESIDENT MARCOS TOLD ME IN ALMOST FERVENT TERMS THAT

HE IS CONVINCED OF QADHAFI'S SERIOUS INTENTION TO SEE THE

AGREEMENT SUCCEED. HE SAYS HE THINKS THAT LIBYAN EMISSARIES

HAVE REPORTED TO TRIPOLI ABOUT THE TRUE FACTS IN MINDANAO

AND HAVE CONVINCED QADHAFI THAT HE HAS BEEN BACKING A LOST

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CAUSE. HE THEREFORE WISHES TO CUT HIS LOSSES AND GET OUT.

3. IMELDA MARCOS CENTERED MOST OF HER COMMENTS ON HER

EXPERIENCES IN TRIPOLI. SHE DESCRIBED THE LIBYAN

OFFICIALS, LED BY JALLUD, AS TOUGH. SHE SAID THEY WERE RUDE

TO HER, DISPARAGING AND ABUSIVE. SHE SAID THEIR NEGOTIATORS

WOULD CONSISTENTLY RENEGE ON MATTERS THEY HAD AGREED AND

OTHERWISE BREAK THEIR WORK. ON THE OTHER HAND, SHE IS CLEARLY FASCINATED BY QADHAFI PERSONALLY AND THINKS HE CAN BE TRUSTED.

4. SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS ARE FAR FROM CONVINCED ABOUT THE WISDOM OF THE TRIPOLI AGREEMENT. GENERAL RAMOS ESTIMATES THE CEASE-FIRE AS ONLY 50 PERCENT EFFECTIVE. HE SAYS IT IS QUITE NEAR THE CITIES, BUT THAT FIGHTING GOES ON IN THE COUNTRYSIDE. HE CHARITABLY ATTRIBUTES THIS TO THE ABSENCE OF AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM AMONG THE MUSLIMS.

5. ADMIRAL ESPALDON, WHO IS CHARGED WITH EXECUTING THE CEASE-FIRE IN THE MILITARY REGION UNDER HIS COMMAND, EAGRLY ASKED ABOUT EXPERIENCE WE HAD GAINED FROM CEASE-FIRES IN VIETNAM AND WANTED TO AVOID PITFALLS. I TOLD HIM OUR BIGGEST PROBLEM WAS IN DEFINING THE AREAS OF CONTROL. HE SAID HE HOPED TO FINESSE THIS BY AVOIDING ANY GEOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTIONS. HE IS VERY CAUTIOUS ABOUT THE PROSPECTS, SAYING THAT THE MNLF HAS LESS THAN FULL CONTROL OF THE SITUATION AND MAY HAVE DIFFICULTY ASSURING A PEACEFUL SITUATION, EVEN IF BOTH THEY AND THE LIBYANS ARE SINCERE.

6. IN GENERAL, I FOUND MOST SENIOR FILIPINOS SKEPTICAL AND A LITTLE RESENTFUL OF THE CENTRAL ROLE WHICH THE LIBYANS ARE PLAYING IN A MATTER WHICH THEY REGARD AS ESSENTIALLY A DOMESTIC CONCERN OF THE PHILIPPINES.
SULLIVAN
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